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# DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARDIZED METHODOLOGY FOR EVALUATING INTERDISCIPLINARY PRO-HEALTH ACTIVITIES: THE NETWORK FOR EVALUATION OF ONE HEALTH (NEOH-COST ACTION TD1404)

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## INTRODUCTION

Today's challenges affecting human and animal health and well-being, such as emerging and endemic zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance, environmental and climate changes, are global both in distribution and effects. A One Health (OH) approach has been advocated as an effective solution to these challenges since an inter-disciplinary effort recognizes their interdependence and complexity. As a result there is a growing number of OH initiatives worldwide, such as establishment of cross-sectoral coordination, communication and data sharing in some countries, integrated surveillance systems, etc. The vast majority of these OH activities is fueled by an expectation that joint actions are more efficient and cost-effective than addressing the same issues using a traditional single-disciplinary approach. However, attempts and procedures for scientific and standardized evaluation of OH are still lacking, which hinders science-based decision making and effective resource allocation.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The "Network for Evaluation of One Health", a COST trans-disciplinary action (TD1404) (NEOH, <http://neoh.onehealthglobal.net/>), was established with the primary purpose of enabling quantitative evaluations of OH initiatives by developing a standardized evaluation protocol to be applied in a suite of case studies. The findings are expected to generate reliable evidence on the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of OH activities for experts, stakeholders and policy makers. This would inform effective and sustainable policies and optimal resource allocation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participants from 22 COST and several non-COST Countries with expertise in multiple disciplines (e.g. ecology, economics, human and animal health, epidemiology, social sciences, etc.) are working together in four different Working Groups (WGs): WG1, developing a framework, index and protocol to be included in a OH handbook; WG2, applying the handbook in selected case studies using available primary and secondary datasets stemming from ongoing OH projects; WG3, conducting a meta-analysis of the available case-study results to facilitate international comparison and elaborate policy recommendations; WG4, seeking a dialogue with national governments, NGOs, research organizations, and industry throughout the project to ensure that the evidence produced addresses decision-makers' needs.

## CONCLUSIONS

We are in the first year of NEOH operation and the activities to date were focused on establishing the network, elaborating the OH handbook content and structure, training on evaluation, as well as dissemination and engagement activities. NEOH is funded by the European Cooperation for Science and Technology (COST) and has four year duration (November 2014-November 2018).

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